

# Blackfeet Quarters Get Radon Mitigation

Selected employee quarters at [Blackfeet Dormitory](#) in Montana have been fitted with improved ventilation systems to lower radon levels. Last year, the quarters tested for increased levels of the gas.

Further tests now show little or no radon gas in the homes.

In 2011, OFMC began radon gas testing with [pilot testing at St. Stephens Indian School](#) in Wyoming and at the [Blackfeet Dormitory](#). For the short-term testing, radon-testing canisters were placed one weekend at a variety of homogeneous areas inside the schools and homes. Results were collected after 48 hours and sent to a lab for analysis.

A follow-up test conducted the following month in the Blackfeet quarters confirmed increased levels of radon gas. Generally, if the lab analysis is lower than 4 pCi/L, radon is not an issue. Some of the quarters registered 4 pCi/L or higher in the follow-up test.

Improving ventilation is often a solution for easing radon levels in a structure. Mitigation for an individual quarters or schools take into consideration the building's foundation and HVAC type. Houses with crawl spaces can install vacuum systems with fans and piping to the roof line.

Radon is a naturally occurring invisible and odorless gas that can cause lung cancer. Radon comes from the decay of uranium which is found in soil and rocks all over the United States.



*Ventilation pipes are prepared outside a housing unit at Blackfeet Dorm in Montana.*



*To keep the radon gas from seeping up into the home, barriers are installed in the crawl space under the housing unit.*



*A ventilation fan is installed in the attic of the home to disperse any radon gas that may accumulate.*

**In FY2013, OFMC will test 84 buildings in the Southwest Region, including schools, dormitories, employee quarters and Agency buildings.**

**Eventually, 183 BIE-funded schools and dormitories, some 3,500 employee living quarters and scores of Agency buildings across Indian Country will be tested.**